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ABSTRACT

Within the field of composition, classical rhetoric was re-discovered in the early 1960s; that interest has been for the most part confined to the first three of the five parts of classical rhetoric--invention, arrangement, and style--with memory and delivery being ignored or, at least, neglected. Recent interest in "the speaking-writing connection," "collaborative learning," and "whole language" indicates an interest in delivery. One scholar suggests that teachers can help children consolidate their oral and written resources through exercises that make the functions of speech and writing as similar as possible, such as oral monologues and expressive writing and through using talk as preparation for writing. Teachers who apply collaborative learning to teaching writing have students work in groups, talking throughout their writing processes. Students work together to discover topics and discover what they have to say about topics. Whole language combines talking and writing with listening and reading to counteract the fragmenting skills approach to education. Taking delivery back into composition classrooms and considering it along with performance is a fascinating possibility. It is hoped that the interest in delivery demonstrated in the speaking-writing connection, in collaborative learning, and especially in whole language will grow. It is an interest in delivery that is more fundamental than the matters of voice and gesture that were so long a part of rhetoric. (Eighteen references are attached.) (MG)

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# The Concept of Delivery Applied to Modern Rhetoric

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# The Concept of Delivery Applied to Modern Rhetoric

## Delivery in Classical Rhetoric

Aristotle laid the basis for the five parts of rhetoric by suggesting, in book 3 of the Rhetoric, that "the 'natural' order of rhetoric is to consider first the materials from which a persuasive speech can be constructed, second the style in which the material can be set forth, and third the delivery of the speech" (Kennedy, 1980, p. 77). Aristotle merely proposed that delivery was an appropriate part of rhetoric and outlined what a fuller discussion of delivery might contain. His student Theophrastus composed a treatise about delivery, dividing it into voice quality and body movements or gestures. Perhaps Theophrastus' concentration on the pragmatic and somewhat mechanical aspects of delivery prevented delivery from being dealt with in a more thoughtful and theoretical way in later works.

The five-part system is not found in full development until two hundred years later, when Hermagoras of Temnos wrote a handbook that has not

survived but can be reconstructed through Cicero, who wrote nearly a hundred years later. In contrast to later works, Rhetorica ad Herennium (long regarded as the work of Cicero and probably at least representing his teachings) puts delivery before memory, "apparently because [the author] thinks it is the more important of the two" (Kennedy, 1980, p. 98). He refers to "a famous story that Demosthenes, when asked what were the three most important things in oratory, replied 'Delivery, delivery, and delivery'" (Kennedy, 1980, p. 98).

Delivery thus came to be an important part of rhetoric. It perhaps received an unhealthy emphasis at times, leaving it vulnerable to attack as an unethical tool of manipulation. At any rate, delivery continued to be studied because rhetoric was concerned with both speaking and writing.

## Rhetoric in the United States

Rhetoric is among the oldest subjects taught in universities for it continued to considered essential for the educated man for many centuries. Only a little more than a hundred years ago, in this country, the place of rhetoric in the university began to decline.

English literature was established as a subject of serious scholarship, and eventually departments of English were established. The early departments included not only literature, but also linguistics and rhetoric (which still included both speaking and writing) (Parker, 1967). Early in this century, departments of English emerged as we know them today--concerned with literature and composition. Scholars of oral rhetoric seceded from the National Council of Teachers of English in 1914 and formed the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (now the Speech Communication Association), leading to the establishment of many departments of speech (Connors, Ede & Lunsford, 1984). After oral rhetoric was removed from English departments, composition focused on writing. Thus, delivery was divorced from rhetoric as studied by scholars in departments of English.

Composition and Delivery

Within the field of composition, classical rhetoric was re-discovered in the early 1960's (Connors, Ede, and Lunsford, 1984). That interest has for the most part been confined to the first three of

the five parts of classical rhetoric--invention, arrangement, and style--with memory and delivery being ignored or, at least, neglected. Knoblauch and Brannon (1984) represent the usual attitude:

> The last two stages were important to orations as oral performances, but are not relevant to written composition: "memory" concerned the mnemonic devices which enabled an orator to recall the parts of an argument in correct sequence, while "delivery" concerned the gestures, body movements, and facial expressions accompanying the performance. (p.35)

I question whether delivery is, in fact, irrelevant to written composition. Certainly, delivery has changed over the centuries. It is no longer a matter of performing speeches committed to memory, for modern technology seems to have freed us from the need for rote memorization to an even greater degree than did the invention of writing. Nonetheless, I believe that recent interest in "the speaking-writing connection," "collaborative learning," and "whole language" indicate an interest in delivery.

The Speaking-Writing Connection

In composition circles there is often talk about "the speaking-writing connection." Twenty years ago Robert Zoellner (1969) proposed "talk-write" as a pedagogy for composition. Zoellner was ahead of his time in advocating that students be urged not to think but to talk before they write, although he was out of step with the current mood because of his invocation of behavioral psychology.

The relationship between speaking and writing is not a simple one. An early stage of writing development, at which some students get stuck, is written-down speech. Hartwell (1984) suggests that students can be helped to move beyond that stage through reading their own writing aloud to someone else or into a tape recorder and through exercises that foster metalinguistic awareness. Kroll (1981) suggests that teachers can help children consolidate their oral and written resources through exercises that make the functions of speech and writing as similar as possible, such as oral monologues and expressive writing and through using talk as preparation for writing.

Leaving the speaking-writing connection, I want to

turn to a consideration of the connections among speaking, writing, and thinking that are used to argue for collaborative learning.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning has a history going back at least a hundred years (DeCiccio, 1988) but is most recently associated with Kenneth Bruffee. He says that the term "collaborative learning" first appeared on the list of topics suggested for discussion at the 1982 annual meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (Bruffee, 1984). Since that time interest has grown steadily.

Bruffee uses the term "collaborative learning" as an umbrella to cover peer tutoring, peer criticism, and classroom group work. He says that in practice it means "a form of indirect teaching in which the teacher sets the problem and organizes students to work it out collectively" (1984, p. 637).

Drawing on the work of the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, Bruffee (1984) explains the rationale behind collaborative learning: Thought is internalized conversation, and writing is internalized conversation re-externalized--thus the connection is among speaking,

thinking, and writing.

Collaborative learning is popular in many subject areas, but my interest in this paper is in its application to teaching writing. Ann Ruggles Gere (1987) writes that the phenomenon of collaborative writing has "almost as many names as the people who employ it" (p. 1), after she has listed "writing groups, the partner method, helping circles, collaborative writing, response groups, team writing, writing laboratories, teacherless writing classes, group inquiry technique, the round table, class criticism, editing sessions, writing teams, workshops, peer tutoring, the socialized method, mutual improvement sessions, intensive peer review" (p. 1).

Teachers who apply collaborative learning to teaching writing have students work in groups, talking throughout their writing processes. Students can work together to discover topics and discover what they have to say about topics. They can work together on early drafts to develop a sensitivity to the needs of readers. They can work together to edit and proofread papers. Finally, students can read papers before small or large groups.

Another way of integrating talking and writing is seen in the whole language approach. Whole language combines talking and writing with listening and reading to counteract the fragmenting skills approach to education.

Whole Language

More than twenty years ago, Ken Goodman (1969) began speaking out for school programs that would expose children to "a wide variety of language. . . . [making] language a supple, fully flexible tool of thought, learning, and communication" (pp. 12-13). During the past twenty years the program that Goodman advocates has become known as "whole language." But whole language is, in fact, much more than a program. It is an approach, a philosophy, in which language is viewed as a whole rather than as bits and pieces. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities are combined, and the child is an active learner rather than a passive vessel to be filled (Lehr, 1990).

The whole language movement began in elementary school but has spread into junior high, high school, and even colleges--although it is not always labelled "whole language." For instance, the Pennsylvania

Department of Education's 1988 document PCRP II: Reading, Writing and Talking across the Curriculum "addresses the critical importance to learning of reading, writing and talking at every grade level, in every subject, as well as in programs for special and remedial education" (Lytle & Botel, 1988, p. 1).

Ponsot and Deen (1982) describe their approach to teaching college composition courses through using writing, reading, and listening together. They say that there is a "rhythm" in their classrooms of "four alternating elements or stresses: we write; we read aloud; we write observations; we read them aloud" (p. 151).

The writing-across-the-curriculum programs that have proliferated in recent years ask that "students work on their writing in all disciplines and at all grade levels" (Young & Fulwiler, 1986, p. 1). I have heard recently of "speech-across-the-curriculum." If the two ideas were combined, they would sound very much like whole language.

The whole language approach is also identifiable in the freshman course proposed in the 1987 joint NCTE/MLA report The English Coalition Conference:

Democracy through Language that "would integrate reading, writing, speaking, and listening and would build on what students already know" (Lloyd-Jones & Lunsford, 1989, p. 27).

The most interesting manifestation I have seen of the whole language approach is "writing-as-performance." In 1986 James VanOosting reported that a number of universities were teaching or developing "a performance approach to creative writing." He writes that such courses assume "that writing and reading are both root performance acts, that one may come to understand the process of composition by reference to performance phenomena, and that the practice of creative writing is enhanced by performance disciplines" (p. 406). In the course he teaches at Southern Illinois University, students perform their own work, four- or five-minute whole works or excerpts. They also rehearse and deliver solo performances of anonymous texts exchanged amorg class members; direct their own text as a group performance; and translate their own text into another performance medium--song, dance, videotape, or film.

Delivery in the Future

VanOosting's work seems significant to me because it once again brings into our picture of delivery the concept of performance. Anita Kurth (1987) picks up this idea of writing as performance, although she does not carry it in the direction VanOosting does. She writes: "Perhaps the closest comparison to writing as a performance course is public speaking" (p. 23). Taking delivery back into composition classrooms and considering it along with performance is a fascinating possibility.

It is, of course, tempting to speculate about the future of our profession. I think--or maybe I hope--that the interest in delivery demonstrated in the speaking-writing connection, in collaborative learning, and especially in whole language will grow. It is an interest in delivery that is more fundamental than the matters of voice and gesture that were so long a part of rhetoric. And, I believe, it is an interest that arises from a deep need to reunite the two halves of rhetoric--speaking and writing.

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